

# WellBeing News

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## WellBeing International 2019

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## **Dec 25, 2019 WellBeing International 2019**

**By** Andrew Rowan, DPhil

This will be our last newsletter of 2019 and WBI would like to take this opportunity to thank you for following our activities through the first full year of our existence. This letter will provide a summary of our activities for 2019 and serve as our annual report. The next (January) WellBeing News will provide more details of our plans for 2020. But first, we send our heartfelt thanks to all our Board members and Global Ambassadors, partner organizations, funding agencies, supporters and others who have engaged with us during 2019. [WBI](#) believes we have established a solid foundation and look forward to further growth in 2020.

The first item to report is the news that the Vice President of WBI's Board, Dr. S. Chinny Krishna, has been honored with the Winsome Constance Kindness Award for 2020. Previous recipients have included Dr. Jane Goodall, Sir David Attenborough and Mrs. Maneka Gandhi (Minister in the current Indian government). The award is conferred by the Kindness Trust of Australia, headed by Philip and Trix Wollen, which supports 500 projects in 40 countries around the world. This is very well-deserved recognition for Dr. Krishna,

who was the first in the world (55 years ago) to propose surgical sterilization (Animal Birth Control) as a humane method for managing street dogs.

During 2019, WellBeing International continued to develop our relationship with our three initial Partners:

- (1) AHPPA in Costa Rica,
- (2) Center for Large Landscape Conservation (CLLC) in Bozeman, Montana, and
- (3) Greyton Farm Animal Sanctuary (GFAS) in South Africa.

We also continued to develop our relationships with the Mayhew (and their project in Kabul, Afghanistan under the auspices of Mayhew Afghanistan) and a new Flagship group, the Blue Cross of India (BCI) in Chennai (see above). These organizations cover a range of program opportunities including humane street dog management (see the Global Dog Campaign below), humane and environmental education (GFAS) and wildlife protection and conservation (CLLC).

During the year, WBI also made feature presentations or received an award at conferences or seminars in Oxford, Denver, Addis Ababa, Cape Town, Mombasa, Sydney, Dalian (China) and Madison, Wisconsin (seven countries and four continents). This outreach provided WBI with important global exposure and the opportunity to develop connections with additional potential partners.

1. Global Dog (and Cat) Campaign. WBI is seeking to develop a core global repository that will track global dog populations and their welfare challenges in a broad attempt to improve the well-being of both dogs and people in communities across the world. This project also has an environmental toehold in that roaming dogs also chase and harass wild animals and the campaign will seek to reduce and even eliminate such threats to wildlife. A detailed campaign proposal has been developed, as have two detailed reports on companion animal issues in the state of Oklahoma and for dogs across the world. These reports are not available for public distribution but WBI will be referring to some of the data collected to support those reports in its 2020 publications. WBI has also had a paper on outdoor cat management published in a new academic journal.
2. Conservation Area Connectivity. WBI has published items in its newsletter emphasizing the damage inflicted on wildlife by linear infrastructure (e.g., roads, railways, canals and fences) and continues to support the importance of providing connections for wildlife so that their populations can thrive and move with safety from one conservation area to another. For the most part, we are endorsing and promoting the activities of our partner, the CLLC, but we will be looking for our own program opportunities in the coming years.
3. Humane and Environmental Education. Education is widely endorsed but its impact is

seldom measured with any depth or success. For the most part, education is measured by an increase in the retention of knowledge, but the real measure of success is behavior change. For example, smoking among U.S. adults has declined from 42% of the population in the 1960s to 14% today. U.S. seatbelt use has gone in the opposite direction, rising from 14% in 1983 to 90% today. It is evident that concern for animals has also increased because public donations to the big four animal protection organizations are increasing much faster (454%) than inflation (147%) over the past 20 years. WBI is planning to develop an environmental and humane education project in Greater Greyton together with measures to test the impact of the educational activities.

4. Plastics in the Ocean. WBI is horrified by the impact that the plastics revolution is having on our planet and especially on the ocean. We began to develop some campaign ideas but have not had the time to expand them into an approach that could help the situation. We continue to explore the issue and also to produce occasional items in our newsletters.
5. The Challenge of Consumption. WBI is beginning to address some of the challenges stemming from high-consuming countries as well as the increase in the human population. We have signed up to partner with Thriving Together, which is a program launched by the Margaret Pyke Trust in the United Kingdom. The Trust connects population and conservation organizations behind a push to reduce the projected peak population in 2100 from 11 billion to something closer to 9 billion. WBI has recently received a development grant to explore a multi-pronged project to address the challenges of growing human consumption and population. The first prong will be aimed at reducing the impact of our current diets and factory farming. In a recent poll, people who ate less meat responded that it was a rewarding change, for a number of different reasons. WBI hopes to capitalize on the notion that millions of individuals will take the pledge to consume less and be more strategic in their life choices.
6. Outreach Activities. WBI has developed and produced two monthly (almost) newsletters. One (WellBeing News) is more technical while the other (Tales of WellBeing) attempts to deliver some good cheer and whimsy to supporter inboxes every month. We are also expanding our social media outreach and are always on the lookout for that viral meme that will allow a core message to explode across cyberspace.

